

TIMES

Circ.: e. 121,657

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Date: APR 26 1961

No Apologies Necessary

NOW THAT it appears that the United States fumbled into an abortive and clumsy effort to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba, we're turning to post-mortems, investigations and other forms of agonizing reappraisal.

Presumably great damage has been done to the "American image." And it is the peculiar risk facing those whose conspiratorial functions are subject to public review in the fish bowl of a constitutional republic that they must be identified and subjected to censure.

This is as it should be. The limitations of accountability handicap the United States in the brand of warfare that is developing with the Soviet Union. But we've given the Central Intelligence Agency more immunity from publicity than any other peacetime institution of government. And we are not about to go far beyond that point.

Still, perhaps we had to try, to fail and to suffer the humiliation of dealing less than adequately with the rising menace of what President Kennedy described as "external Communist penetration." Because such penetration, reaching the stage of sophistication and menacing power that it has in Cuba, must now be regarded as comparable in its dangerous danger to "external attack." Penetration is only a slightly disguised form of attack, let's face it.

We do not doubt that the more thoughtful and perceptive observers in the nations of Latin America accept the destructive implications of Castroism in Central and South America and throughout the Caribbean. For they know, better than outsiders, how receptive to revolution the prevailing economic and political conditions of their societies have made their peoples.

But open, vigorous denunciation of Castro and commendation of the United States for its interest in unseating him are politically dangerous in areas where Castro's virus has found its way into the bloodstream of feverish people.

The United States is, therefore, not likely to enjoy support from the Organization of American States in

imposes obligations and restraints in the dealings of all with any country of the hemisphere.

Mr. Kennedy was cognizant of the foregoing realities and commitments when he began what may be an awkward but necessary withdrawal from bilateral treaty alignments in matters of hemispheric security. He asked "all the free nations of this hemisphere . . . to take an even closer and more realistic look at the menace of external Communist intervention and domination in Cuba." Having expressed a willingness to act in "concert" with Latin American nations in the "new and deeper struggle" mounted by the Soviet-Castro complex, the President then emphasized that the United States "will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations which relate to the security of our own nation."

The first reaction around the world to the image of a United States determined to resurrect the Monroe Doctrine and apply it to total Communist "penetration" was negative. Part of it, perhaps, reflected disgust with the bumbling of the new World Leader which, but a few years ago, was quick to judge and to criticize the policies of the older colonial powers. Others doubtless feel that the United States is borrowing trouble by imputing to Castro more hemispheric influence than he is likely to have.

But whether or not we have acted precipitously in Cuba, a new American definition of policy toward Communist penetration into areas of our national interest—accompanied by fomented hostilities as in the Caribbean—had to come. It had to be made clear. It must now be made a part of rationale of response in the Cold War as extended to the Western World.

If the Castro regime continues its point by point betrayal of the Cuban people; if it continues to embrace the techniques and develop the muscles of a Soviet political and military arm; if it is a proven source and active carrier of Communist contagion in the Western Hemisphere, then it must be accepted as an enemy of the United States, to be dealt with as such, and in a manner that will be